

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 00925 01 OF 02 280520Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 MCT-01 AGRE-00
EUR-12 /101 W
-----071792 280650Z /11

R 271844Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0918
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS
USCINCLANT NORFOLK, VA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 0925

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SGEN, PINS, ETRD, ELAB,PINT, ASEC, PEPR, VE
SUBJECT: THIS WEEK IN VENEZUELA

REF: CARACAS 0633

SUMMARY: VENEZUELANS COMMEMORATE THE OVERTHROW OF THE PEREZ
JIMENEZ REGIME.ARMYPATROLS UNCOVER GUERRILLA CACHES
OF ARMS AND SUPPLIES. FREE IMPORTATION OF SELECTED FOOD ITEMS
ENDS. TRADE UNION ELECTION YEILED NARROW ACCION DEMOCRATICA
VICTORY. THE NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING-OWENS-ILLINOIS MAKES A NEUTRAL
REPLY TO JACK ANDERSON COLUMN. YUGOSLAV DELEGATION VISITS VENEZUELA.
END SUMMARY.

1. VENEZUELANS COMMEMORATE THE OVERTHROW OF PEREZ
JIMENEZ REGIME. THE COMMEMORATION OF JAN 23 (THE
OVERTHROW OF PEREZ JIMENEZ ON JAN 23, 1958) AND THE CELEBRATION OF
"20 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY" OCCUPIED THE ATTENTION AND ACTIVITIES
OF THE MEDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT THIS WEEK.PRESIDENT PEREZ
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 00925 01 OF 02 280520Z

DECLARED JAN. 23 A DAY OF SPECIAL COMMEMORATION AND THE FOLLOWING
WEEK WAS MARKED BY A SERIES OF CEREMONIES AND FESTIVITIES
HELD PRIMARILY IN CARACAS BUT ALSO THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

2. ACTIVITIES INCLUDED A PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE
NATION (BASICALLY PATRIOTIC AND NON-PARTISAN IN TONE), SPEECHES
AND INTERVIEWS WITH COPEI, AD, AND OTHER

INDIVIDUALS AND LEASERS PROMINENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH OPPOSITION TO AND THE OVERTHROW OF PEREZ JIMENEZ. THE FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ALSO SPONSORED A STUDENT MARCH OF UNIVERSITY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON JAN 23 TO COMMEMORATE EVENTS. ONLY AN ESTIMATED 600 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED, WITH THE MARCH DISINTEGRATING INTO BOTTLE THROWING AND WINDOW BREAKING, AS ULTRA-LEFTIST GROUPS ATTEMPTED TO TAKE IT OVER. THE MINOR VIOLENCE WAS QUICKLY BROKEN UP BY POLICE. NEWSPAPERS PREPARED SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTS AND EDITORIALS, MAGAZINES SPECIAL ISSUES, WHILE RADIO AND TELEVISION CARRIED SPECIAL PROGRAMMING, ALL DEALING WITH THE 1958 OUSTER OF THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP. MOST POLITICIANS TOOK NOTE OF THE ANNIVERSARY WITH A BRIEF MORATORIUM IN THEIR CAMPAIGN RHETORIC AND CONFINED THEIR REMARKS TO LAUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING

OF 20 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA. NOTING THAT JAN. 23 AND DEMOCRACY HAD RETURNED THE GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE, PEREZ WENT ON TO "RETURN" MIRAFLORES (THE EXECUTIVE PALACE) TO THE PEOPLE--FOR

PART OF A DAY, AT LEAST, BY OPENING IT TO THE PUBLIC. PEREZ, EVER THE POLITICIAN AND MINDFUL OF THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN, WAS ON HAND TO GREET AND SHAKE HANDS WITH MANY OF THE ESTIMATED 20,000 PERSONS WHO VISITED MIRAFLORES DURING THE SIX-HOUR PERIOD.

3. DESPITE THE JUBILATION AND SELF-CONGRATULATION, SOME EDITORIALISTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 00925 01 OF 02 280520Z

AND POLITICIANS TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO WARN THAT ALL WAS NOT RIGHT WITH VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY AND THAT THE "SPIRIT OF 58" HAD DEGENERATED INTO THE AVARICE OF 78 AND DEMOCRATIC FLABBINESS. IN PARTICULAR, THE MAS PARTY TOOK COPEI AND AD TO TASK, IN FULL PAGE ADS IN THE MAJOR CARACAS DAILIES, CHARGING THEM WITH FAILING AND FORGETTING THE MASSES DURING THIS 20-YEAR PERIOD OF DEMOCRACY AND AFFLUENCE.

4. ARMY PATROLS UNCOVER GUERRILLA CACHES OF ARMS AND SUPPLIES. THE LOCAL PRESS DURING THE WEEK REPORTED THAT SINCE DECEMBER, WHEN THEY BEGAN, ARMY OPERATIONS IN EASTERN VENEZUELA HAVE RESULTED IN THE DISCOVERY OF 18 ABANDONED CAVES AND CACHES OF ARMS AND SUPPLIES IN ANZOATEGUI AND MONAGAS STATES. ARRESTS OF INDIVIDUALS SYMPATHETIC TO OR INVOLVED IN GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES WERE ALSO CONFIRMED IN A PRESS INTERVIEW WITH INTERIOR MINISTER OCTAVIO LEPAGE ON JAN. 23.

5. ON JAN 26, MINISTER OF DEFENSE FERNANDO PAREDES BELLO CONFIRMED THAT AN ARMED GROUP OF 20 MEN AND 2 WOMEN TOOK OVER AND HELD THE SMALL VILLAGE OF CAMPO CLARO IN ANZOATEGUI STATE, JAN. 23, FOR THREE HOURS, LECTURING THE TOWNSPEOPLE AND URGING THEM TO REFRAIN FROM VOTING IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS.

6. COMMENT: ABANDONED ARMS CACHES WERE REPORTEDLY FOUND IN THE MOST
EASTERLY PORTIONS OF ANZOATEGUI AND MONAGAS STATES, WHERE THE GOV
FIRST BEGAN ITS ANTI-GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. LAST WEEK'S ATTACK
ON ARMY PATROLS (REFTEL) OCCURRED SOME 200 KILOMETERS SOUTHWEST OF
GENERAL AREA OF ABANDONED CACHES. THE GUERRILLA ACITIVITY REPORTED IN
THE JAN. 26 PRESS OCCURRED IN A VILLAGE LOCATED 50 KILOMETERS
AWAY FROM LAST WEEK'S ATTACKS. THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS SUGGEST THAT
PRESSURE OF ARMY OPERATIONS IN EASTERN VENEZUELA MAY HAVE FORCED
THE GUERRILLAS TO MOVE WEST, OR THAT THE GUERRILLAS ARE STAGING
DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES TO DRAW THE FOCUS OF ARMY PRESSURE AWAY FROM
MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS OF ANZOATEGUI WHERE THE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS
WERE ORIGINALLY CENTERED.

7. FREE IMPORTATION OF SELECTED FOOD ITEMS ENDS.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 CARACA 00925 01 OF 02 280520Z

THE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE PERMITTING FREE IMPORTATION OF
SELECTED FOOD PRODUCTS (INCLUDING SUCH BASIC ITEMS AS
BLACK BEANS,PORK, CHICKEN, EGGS) EXPIRED ON JANUARY 23, 1978. THE
ORIGINAL DECREE HAD BEEN AMENDED AND EXTENDED SINCE BEING ISSUED
ON APRIL 23, 1977. UNOFFICIAL SOURCES INDICATED THAT THE DECREE
WILL NOT BE RENEWED. SHORTAGES OF CERTAIN FOOD ITEMS, HOWEVER, MAY
DEVELOP WITHIN A FEW WEEKS OR MONTHS AND MAY REQUIRE SIMILAR ACTION
TO SATISFY DEMAND. CURRENTLY, THE GOVERNMENT'S AGRICULTURAL MARKETING
CORPORATION HAS SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPORTING FOOD PRODUCTS
PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE DECREE.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 00925 02 OF 02 280633Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGRE-00 MCT-01
EUR-12 /101 W

-----073371 280650Z /11

R 271844Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0919
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS
USCINCLANT NORFOLK, VA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 0925

8. TRADE UNION ELECTION YIELDS NARROW ACCION DEMOCRATICA VICTORY. THE FIFTH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF HEALTH WORKERS (FETRASALUD) PRODUCED A NARROW ELECTION VICTORY FOR THE ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) PARTY. ISMARIO GONZALEZ OF AD AND THE FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF FETRASALUS, EASILY WON REELECTION AT THE CONVENTION HELD JANUARY 20-22. (GONZALEZ IS ALSO PRESIDENT OF THE INTER-AMERICA REGIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF COMMERCIAL, CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES.) IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE, HOWEVER, AD, IN COALITION WITH TRADE UNIONISTS OF THE MINOR MORENA PARTY, LOST ONE SEAT TO A COALITION OF THE SOCIAL CHRISTIANS (COPEI), AND TWO LEFTIST PARTIES, THE MOVIMIENTO ELECTORAL DEL PUEBLO (MEP) AND THE MOVIMIENTO AL SOCIALISMO (MAS). THE ELECTION LEAVES THE AD/MORENA COALITION WITH A NARROW 5-4 MAJORITY IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. ELECTION YEAR POLITICAS WAS EVIDENT IN THE OPENING SESSION OF THE CONVENTION WHEN A ROUSING PRO-AD SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONVENTION PROVOKED A WALK-OUT OF DELEGATES FROM OTHER PARTIES.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 00925 02 OF 02 280633Z

9. COMMENT: ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, THERE WERE SOME TECHNICAL REASONS FOR SLIPPAGE OF THE AD/MORENA MAJORITY DUE TO THE FACT THAT DELEGATES FROM SEVERAL AD-ORIENTED UNIONS WERE INELIGIBLE TO VOTE BECAUSE THEIR UNIONS HAD NOT HAD RECENT ELECTIONS. PRESIDENT ISMARIO GONZALEZ WITH HIS AD/MORENA MAJORITY ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL BE ABLE TO ASSURE THAT AD INTERESTS ARE PROTECTED IN THE UNION. NEVERTHELESS, COPEI AND THE LEFTIST TRADE UNIONISTS WILL TAKE HEART THAT THEY ARE WHITTLED AWAY AT AD DOMINANCE IN AN IMPORTANT FEDERATION.

10. THE NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING-OWENS-ILLINOIS MAKES A NEUTRAL REPLY TO JACK ANDERSON COLUMN. THE JANUARY 25 DAILY JOURNAL REPRINTED THE JACK ANDERSON COLUMN WHICH STATED THAT NIEHOUS' COMPANY, OWEN-ILLINOIS (O-I), HAD BEEN CONTACTED BY THE KIDNAPPERS IN THE SPRING OF 1977, BUT THAT THE COMPANY, THROUGH NOBODY'S FAULT, FAILED TO REPLY. THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE EL NACIONAL CARRIED A LATIN WIRE SERVICE STORY ON THE ANDERSON COLUMN AND THE RESPONSE OF O-I. ACCORDING TO THIS STORY, SPOKESMEN FOR O-I SAID THAT THE COMPANY IS CONTINUING IN ITS EFFORTS TO CONTACT THE CAPTORS AND THAT IT APPRECIATED ANDERSON'S OFFER TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY IN ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS. THE COMPANY, HOWEVER, DECLINED TO CONFIRM OR DENY THE CHARGE THAT IT HAD RECEIVED ANY COMMUNICATION FROM THE KIDNAPPERS. LOCALLY, THE COMPANY MADE NO COMMENT ON THE ARTICLE.

11. YUGOSLAV DELEGATION VISITS VENEZUELA. ON THEIR SECOND STOP OF A LATIN AMERICAN TOUR, WHICH HAS INCLUDED STOPS IN MEXICO, VENEZUELA, GUYANA AND JAMAICA, A JOINT DELEGATION OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS AND THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE OF YUGOSLAVIA VISITED CARACAS JAN. 17-22. THE DELEGATION, LED BY MUNIR MESIHOVIC, MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF FOUR LEFTIST PARTIES, THE MOVIMIENTO AL SOCIALISMO (MAS), MOVIMIENTO ELECTORAL DE PUEBLO (MEP), MOVIMIENTO DE IZQUIERDA REVOLUCIONARIA (MIR) AND THE VENEZUELAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCV). THEY ALSO MET WITH THE CENTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 00925 02 OF 02 280633Z

SOCIAL CHRISTIAN (COPEI) AND ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) PARTIES. TALKS WITH PARTY REPRESENTATIVES CENTERED ON IMPROVEMENT OF VENEZUELAN-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS MOVEMENT.

12. OTHER REPORTING THIS WEEK INCLUDED ARMS LIMITATION UNDER AYACUCHO DECLARATION (CARACAS 820), LOS-PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY VENEZUELA'S INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN TRADE (CARACAS 757), VENEZUELAN TRADE UNION CENTER

CRITICISM OF BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT (CARACAS 664), BRITISH MINISTER DISCUSSES ENERGY COOPERATION (CARACAS 636), OIL COMPANY PROBLEMS-SUN (CARACAS 661), IMPORT RESTRICTIONS- HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES (CARACAS 650), CIVAIR: REQUEST FOR INFORMAL TALKS ON RATES (CARACAS 615), INTELSAT CONSIDERATION OF SHUTTLE AND ARIANE LAUNCH VEHICLE (CARACAS 552), NEW IRS RULINGS ON TAX CREDITS FOR U.S. COMPANIES OPERATING IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES (CARACAS 787), AND MAJOR PROJECTS -AUTOMOTIVE EXPANSION (CARACAS 643), PORT OF CARENERO (CARCAS 640), CARACAS STADIUM (CARCAS 725), THIRD CARONI RIVER BRIDGE (CARACAS 786), UVERITO PULP MILL (CARACAS 607), AND LICENSING PROCEDURES FOR FOREIGN ENGINEERS (CARACAS A-07).VAKY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CARACA00925
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780042-0370
Format: TEL
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780116/aaaaamsg.tel
Line Count: 259
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 47b570df-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CARACAS 633
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3703461
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THIS WEEK IN VENEZUELA
TAGS: SGEN, PINS, ETRD, ELAB, PINT, ASEC, PEPR, VE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/47b570df-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014